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# Embassy security proposal criticized

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Critics of an administration plan to spend \$4.4 billion to upgrade security at U.S. embassies say the program is unmanageable and will still leave American installations abroad vulnerable to terrorist attacks.

"They [the State Department] don't know how to spend what they've got now," said one Reagan administration official. "The folks don't handle money like you would at home."

"All of a sudden they're going to be spending twice as much money as they're used to," said an official with American Foreign Service Association, a union for foreign service officers. "What does that say to you? That's a lot of money coming down the pike."

Both critics spoke on condition that they not be identified.

But David Fields, an assistant secretary of state, told the Senate Anti-terrorism Caucus yesterday that the Senate should approve the program swiftly because several U.S. embassies located on busy streets in world capitals are "sitting ducks" for fanatical suicide terrorists.

Libya's official radio yesterday called for Arab suicide squads to attack U.S. embassies worldwide following armed clashes between U.S. and Libyan forces in the Gulf of Sidra.

The construction program, already on the State Department drawing board, is among several recommendations made last June by a special panel appointed by Secretary of State George Shultz and headed by retired Adm. Bobby Ray Inman, a former CIA deputy director.

Mr. Inman, a former director of the National Security Agency, said yesterday that State Department officials who advocate upgrading security abroad in a piece-meal fashion aren't fully focused on the problem.

"Doing things the way they were done in the past will not adequately protect this country," Mr. Inman said.

The largest overseas peacetime

construction project in U.S. history, the embassy security upgrade program calls for the construction of 70 new embassies and other facilities, the relocation or renovation of 23 and the rehabilitation of eight more.

"I don't know whether they [embassies] have to be hardened or not, but I do know that won't solve the problem," said the administration critic.

"If I was looking at this program, it would be as a go-slow kind of thing," the administration official said. "Protect only the places that have to be protected."

Peter Smeallie, director of a National Academy of Sciences panel that studied how to build more secure embassies, said, "There was a lot of concern that the embassies that are being selected for relocation or reinforcement are not the best ones."

Mr. Smeallie noted that one of the three criteria developed by a special commission to relocate an embassy or other facility was the condition that it not have a 100-foot setback from the road.

"Basically you're not going to do anything at the London embassy; it's a landmark," Mr. Smeallie said. "They're not going to move out of there because they don't have a 100-foot setback. They don't have 5 feet."

"London is a big question mark. I'll be the first to admit that," Rep. Dan Mica, a Florida Democrat who is the chief House advocate of the funding hike, said. "We don't know

what we're going to do there. We [the buildings] are essentially hanging out on the street there on three or four sides."

Mr. Mica conceded the State Department has had problems managing construction efforts, using the recent construction of an embassy in Egypt as "a textbook case of disaster. Everything that could go wrong went wrong."

But, Mr. Mica said, "We went to extraordinary lengths to write this [setback] condition [into the security upgrade plan], because of our concern over their past track record."

"Because we have these concerns doesn't mean we shouldn't try to address these very critical — life-saving if you will — needs that have been identified," he said.